

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

Please amend claim 1 as follows:

- Claim 1 (Currently Amended): A steam reforming-fuel cell system comprising:
- a) a steam reforming reactor comprising two concentric sections including a larger outside section and a smaller inside section and an annulus containing reforming catalyst between said sections;
 - said annulus section having an inlet for steam and vaporizable hydrocarbon, a flow path for hydrogen and by-product gases resulting from reforming reactions taking place in said annulus section, and an outlet for said by-product gases;
 - said outside section being in heat transferring contact with said annulus section, and having an inlet for preheated air or other oxidant and a plurality of tubes for fuel gas, said tubes having openings through which the fuel gas flows and is mixed with said air or other oxidant resulting in flameless distributed combustion, whereby uniform or tailored, controlled heat is transferred to said annulus section; and
 - said inside section having a hydrogen-selective, hydrogen-permeable membrane positioned either on the inside or outside of said inside section, and an outlet for hydrogen which permeates through said membrane from said annulus section into said inside section and passes through said outlet; and
 - b) a fuel cell in direct communication with the outlet for hydrogen of said steam reforming reactor.

Claim 2 (Previously Presented): The apparatus of Claim 1 wherein an inlet adapted to convey a sweep gas is in communication with said inside section to promote the diffusion of hydrogen through said membrane.

Claim 3 (Canceled)

Claim 4 (Previously Presented): The apparatus of Claim 2 wherein said reforming catalyst comprises at least one Group VIII transition metal.

Claim 5 (Original): The apparatus of Claim 4 wherein said reforming catalyst comprises nickel.

Claim 6 (Original): The apparatus of Claim 4 wherein said reforming catalyst is on a support.

Claim 7 (Previously Presented): The apparatus of Claim 6 wherein said support is selected from the group consisting of oxides, carbides, and nitrides of Group III A, IIIB, IV A, IVB, and Group VIII metals of the Periodic Table.

Claim 8 (Previously Presented): The apparatus of Claim 7 wherein said support is selected from the group consisting of porous metal oxides.

Claim 9 (Canceled)

Claim 10 (Original): The apparatus of Claim 8 wherein the support comprises alumina.

Claim 11 (Original): The apparatus of Claim 10 wherein said reforming catalyst comprises nickel on alumina.

Claim 12 (Previously Presented): The apparatus of Claim 1 wherein said hydrogen-permeable selective membrane comprises one or more metals selected from the group consisting of palladium, platinum, nickel, silver, tantalum, vanadium, yttrium, niobium, cerium, holmium, lanthanum, gold and alloys thereof.

Claim 13 (Previously Presented): The apparatus of Claim 12 wherein said hydrogen-permeable membrane is situated on a support.

Claim 14 (Original): The apparatus of Claim 13 wherein the support is selected from oxides, carbides, and nitrides of Group IIIA, IIIB, IVA, and IVB.

Claim 15 (Original): The apparatus of Claim 13 wherein the support comprises a porous metal or porous ceramic support.

Claim 16 (Original): The apparatus of Claim 13 wherein the support comprises a porous metal support.

Claim 17 (Original): The apparatus of Claim 15 wherein the support comprises alumina.

Claim 18 (Previously Presented): The apparatus of Claim 15 wherein the support comprises porous stainless steel.

Claim 19 (Previously Presented): The apparatus of Claim 13 wherein said membrane support is located between the membrane and the catalyst.

Claim 20 (Previously Presented): The apparatus of Claim 19 wherein the membrane support is adapted to limit heat transfer to the membrane.

Claim 21 (Previously Presented): The apparatus of Claim 20 wherein the support is alumina.

Claim 22 (Original): The apparatus of Claim 12 wherein said hydrogen-permeable membrane is selected from palladium and palladium alloys.

Claim 23 (Previously Presented): The apparatus of Claim 22 wherein said hydrogen-permeable membrane comprises at least one of an alloy of Pd with 30-50 wt% copper, an alloy of Pd with 5-30 wt% silver, an alloy of Pd with 1-10 wt% yttrium, an alloy of Pd with 1-10wt% holmium, an alloy of Pd with 10wt% gold, an alloy of Pd with 1-10wt% ruthenium and an alloy of Pd with 1-10 wt% cerium.

Claim 24 (Original): The apparatus of Claim 12 wherein the hydrogen-permeable selective membrane is selected from platinum and platinum alloys.

Claim 25 (Original): The apparatus of Claim 12 wherein said membrane has a thickness in the range of 10 Angstroms to 150mm.

Claim 26 (Original): The apparatus of Claim 25 wherein said membrane has a thickness in the range of 0.1 to 20mm.

Claim 27 (Original): The apparatus of Claim 26 wherein said membrane has a thickness in the range of 0.5 to 10mm.

Claim 28 (Previously Presented): The apparatus of Claim 27 wherein said membrane has a permeability in the range of 8×10^{-4} to 80 standard cubic meters/m²-sec-bar^{1/2}.

Claims 29-31 (Canceled)

Claim 32 (Previously Presented): The apparatus of Claim 1 wherein the fuel cell is a fuel cell adapted to operate at pressures of greater than atmospheric pressure.

Claim 33 (Previously Presented): The apparatus of Claim 32 wherein the fuel cell is a molten carbonate fuel cell adapted to operate at pressures of greater than atmospheric pressure.

Claim 34 (Previously Presented): The apparatus of Claim 1 wherein said steam reformer is scalable and easily adjustable to any size fuel cell.

Claim 35 (Previously Presented): The apparatus of Claim 34 wherein said steam reformer is mobile.

Claims 36-39 (Canceled)

Claim 40 (Previously Presented): The apparatus of Claim 1 wherein said steam reformer is constructed of an alloy containing less than 25% Cr and less than 20% Ni, with most of the balance comprising iron.

Claim 41 (Previously Presented): The apparatus of Claim 40 wherein the alloy contains about 15 to 20% Cr and about 5 to 15% Ni.

Claim 42 (Original): The apparatus of Claim 41 wherein the alloy is AISI 304 stainless steel, comprising about 18% Cr, about 8% Ni, and the most of the balance Fe.

Claim 43 (Previously Presented): The apparatus of claim 2 wherein the apparatus is adapted to convey steam as a sweep gas.

Claim 44 (Previously Presented): The apparatus of claim 1 wherein said inside section is packed with a methanation catalyst to react with any trace amounts of CO present in the hydrogen which permeates through said membrane.

Claim 45 (Previously Presented): The apparatus of claim 1 wherein the apparatus is adapted to transfer between 90 and 95% of the heat generated by the flameless distributed combustion in the outside section to said annulus section containing said reforming catalyst.

Claim 46 (Canceled)